


THE KILBURN MEMORIAL CONCERT SERIES
AND THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

PRESENTS

THE 2012 VISITING QUARTET IN RESIDENCE



Afiara String Quartet

Valerie Li, violin, Yuri Cho, violin
David Samuel, viola, Adrian Fung, cello
Saturday, March 3, 2012 at 8:00 pm
Convocation Hall, Old Arts Building

Valerie Li, violin David Samuel, viola
Yuri Cho, violin Adrian Fung, cello

String Quartet no. 11, Op. 95 in f minor, "Serioso" (1810) L. van Beethoven (1770-1827)

- I. *Allegro con brio*
- II. *Allegretto ma non troppo*
- III. *Allegro assai vivace ma serio*
- IV. *Larghetto espressivo; Allegretto agitato; Allegro*

String Quartet no. 4, Op 44 in F Major Carl Nielsen
(1906) (1865-1931)

- I. *Allegro non tanto e comodo*
- II. *Adagio con sentimētio religioso*
- III. *Allegretto moderato ed innocento*
- IV. *Molto adagio. Allegro non tanto, ma molto scherzoso*

<i>String Quartet Op. 56 in d minor,</i> <i>"Voces Intimae" (1909)</i>	Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)
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- I. *Andante. Allegro molto moderato*
- II. *Vivace*
- III. *Adagio di molto*
- IV. *Allegretto (ma pesante)*
- V. *Allegro*



The all-Canadian **Afiara String Quartet** offers performances of “startling intensity” with a “powerful, keen-edged collective sound” (San Francisco Classical Voice). Winner of the Concert Artists Guild International Competition, the Young Canadian Musicians Award, top prizes at the Munich ARD International Music Competition and the Banff International String Quartet Competition, where they also took the Szekely Prize for the best performance of Beethoven, the Afiara balances a lively interest in new works with deep insight into core classical repertoire.

The Department of Music would like to thank the following people and organizations for generously supporting this program:

The Office of the Dean of Arts, The Office of the Provost, Guillaume Tardif, David Gramit, Brenda Dalen, Tom & Mary Johnson, the Kilburn family for their ongoing support, and our audience for supporting great events like this!

Violinist **Valerie Li** received her Bachelor's from the Peabody Conservatory and her Master's from the New England Conservatory. She has performed at the Kennedy Center, Carnegie, Jordan and Strathmore Halls. Ms. Li won first prize in Chamber Music at the National Music Festival of Canada and was the recipient of a British Columbia Arts Council Award to study at Peabody, where she won the Marbury Prize and the Hulsteyn Award. Ms. Li has been named a fellow at Tanglewood Music Center and Aspen Music Festival, and has performed at Taos School of Music in New Mexico and the Banff Centre for the Performing Arts. She has played with the Baltimore and Singapore Symphonies and served as Concertmaster of the New England Conservatory Philharmonia, the Peabody Symphony Orchestra and with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Ms. Li has studied violin with Miriam Fried, Herbert Greenberg, and Gwen Thompson and chamber music with members of the Takacs, Juilliard, Vermeer, and Borromeo String Quartets.

Violinist **Yuri Cho** received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School, where she studied with Dorothy Delay, Naoko Tanaka, and Masao Kawasaki as a recipient of the Dorothy Starling Violin Scholarship and the Jean Doyle Loomis Award, and the Artist Certificate in Chamber Music from the San Francisco Conservatory. She was a featured soloist with the Seoul Royal Symphony in Korea and Japan, the Concordia Symphony Orchestra in Canada, and has given concerts in New York's Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, and in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Ms. Cho has performed with Norman Fischer, Jean-Michel Fonteneau, Paul Hersh, Jodi Levitz, and Ian Swensen. She was named an Osher Scholar at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Ian Swensen and was a faculty member of the San Francisco Conservatory's Preparatory Division. Ms. Cho is playing a 1773 Guidantus violin, on loan from The Banff Centre.

Violist **David Samuel** received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School under the Nathan Gordon Scholarship and the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship, and the Artist Certificate in Chamber Music from the San Francisco Conservatory. He has studied viola with Karen Tuttle, Michael Tree, and Paul Hersh, and chamber music with Emanuel Ax, Joseph Kalichstein, and members of the Juilliard String Quartet. He has performed in Canada, the U.S., and more than a dozen countries in Europe. His concerts have taken him to the Berlin Konzerthaus, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center. As an orchestral musician, Mr. Samuel has been the principal violist of the Juilliard Orchestra and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival Orchestra. As a chamber musician, he performed with Robert Mann, Bonnie Hampton, Norman Fischer, Martha Katz, and Pinchas Zukerman. Mr. Samuel has been a teaching assistant to Michael Tree and was previously on faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Preparatory Division.

Cellist **Adrian Fung** has given solo recitals in New York's Carnegie Hall, the Goethe Institute, Montreal's Pollack Hall, the Toronto Centre of the Performing Arts, the Living Arts Centre, and Taiwan's National Concert Hall. He has been soloist with Ensemble 212, Columbia Chamber Players, and the Oakville Symphony. Mr. Fung was awarded an Artist Grant from the New York Foundation of the Arts and received the Goodrich Award from the National Arts Centre of Canada. He has performed at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center and the Orford Music Festival's "Musicians On Tour" and premiered several works, including pieces by Huck Hodge and the International Society of Contemporary Music. Mr. Fung studied cello with Bonnie Hampton, Jean-Michel Fonteneau, Fred Sherry, Antonio Lysy, David Hetherington, and Susan Gagnon. An Osher Scholar, he received his Bachelor's degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and performance diplomas from McGill University and Mannes College.

The all-Canadian **Afiara String Quartet** is widely noted for its engaging, authentic presence and performances balancing "intensity and commitment" with "frequent moments of tenderness." [The Montreal Gazette].

Winner of the 2008 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, the 2010 Young Canadian Musicians Award, top prizes at the Munich ARD International Music Competition and the Banff International String Quartet Competition, where they also took the Szekely Prize for best Beethoven interpretation, the Afiara String Quartet has lively interest in new works and fresh insight into core classical repertoire.

In the 2011/2012 season, the Afiara appears twice at New York City's Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, with Bruce Adolphe and with Jörg Widman. They perform at the Baryshnikov Arts Centre in New York City, at Stamford Chamber Music Group in Connecticut, ProMusica San Miguel de Allende in Mexico, Music at Kohl Mansion in California, Chamber Music Cincinnati, Art Center Chamber Music Concerts in New Jersey, and elsewhere in North America.

The quartet also offers masterclasses, educational outreach and performances in residency at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, and for their annual return to Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music as Visiting-Quartet-in-Residence.

Last season Afiara appeared in New York City at Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Concert Hall and for the Americas Society; at the Kennedy Center both for the Mendelssohn Octet with the Juilliard String Quartet; and also presented in concert by the Washington Performing Arts Society. They opened the Montreal Chamber Music Festival's six-concert Beethoven String Quartet Cycle, sharing duties with the Tokyo and Chiara String Quartets.

The Afiara also performed at Las Cruces Concerts in New Mexico; Vancouver's Music in the Morning; in São Paulo, Brazil; at the Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam; throughout Denmark and elsewhere. The quartet also made its Ravinia debut playing works by Haydn, Beethoven and Dvorak. They returned to residencies at The Banff Centre and the Indiana University Summer Music Festival, and appeared in concerts at the Festival of the Sound in Ontario, the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, Domaine Forget, and the Waterside Summer Series.

Other recent highlights include performances at San Francisco Performances, the Library of Congress, the Chautauqua Institution, Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Indiana University's Summer Music Festival, Princeton University's Summer Chamber Music Series, the San Jose Chamber Music Society, and the Calgary ProMusica Series, et al.

Next season, the quartet looks forward to debuts at London's Wigmore Hall and the Esterházy Palace in Eisenstadt, Austria, as well as an extensive tour of Denmark and Sweden.

Passionate advocates of new music, the Afiara String Quartet has embarked on a project with the Common Sense Composers' Collective and Cecilia String Quartet, performing and recording eight new quartet works at The Banff Centre. Enjoying a friendly mentorship with the Kronos Quartet, the Afiara offered affectionate tribute at the Kronos' June 2011 Avery Fisher Prize Presentation, playing Aleksandra Vrebalov's "Pannonia Boundless". The Afiara have also performed the world premieres of Brett Abigana's String Quartet No. 2, "Lockdown" by Dan Becker, and Jason Bush's "Visions" – all written specifically for them. Among other new music highlights, the Afiara have collaborated with timpanist Louis Siu in a set of commissions, and with singer/songwriter Kyrie Kristmanson and composer Patrick Carrabre for a world premiere song-cycle at the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival.

The Afiara String Quartet has been heard on Bavarian Radio, CBC Radio 2, TROS in the Netherlands, San Francisco's KALW, New York's WQXR and are featured in the Road to Banff documentary. Their debut CD, on the Foghorn Classics label, features quartets by Mendelssohn and Schubert, as well as the Mendelssohn Octet with the Alexander String Quartet.

In 2011, the Afiara String Quartet completed a two-year tenure as graduate resident string quartet at The Juilliard School in New York, where they served as teaching assistants to the Juilliard String Quartet. Prior to that, they were the Morrison Fellowship Quartet-in-Residence at San Francisco State University's International Center for the Arts (2007-2009), where the members were teaching assistants to their mentor ensemble, the Alexander String Quartet.

The Afiara players have also worked with musicians and ensembles including the American, Cavani, Emerson, Kronos, St. Lawrence, Takacs and Ying Quartets, Earl Carlyss, James Dunham, Henk Guittart, Bonnie Hampton, and at the San Francisco Conservatory, where they were formed, with Paul Hersh, Mark Sokol and Ian Swensen.

Recognizing the vital importance of music education and advocacy, the Afiara String Quartet pursues its own teaching work, in residence at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music and as faculty at Chamber Music of the Rockies, Indiana University Summer String Academy, and Canada's Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute, among other institutions. They also provide educational outreach and make regular appearances at The Banff Centre, which generously provides the 1737 Guidantus violin played by second violinist Yuri Cho.

Formed in 2006, the Afiara String Quartet takes its name from the Spanish *fiar*, meaning "to trust", a basic element vital to the depth and joy of its music-making.

About The Nicholas Arthur Kilburn Memorial Concert Series

Peter Kilburn, the donor and founder of 'The Nicholas Arthur Kilburn Memorial Concert Series,' wrote the following to Dr. Robert A. Stangeland, the former Chairman of the Department of Music, on the 29th of September 1980:

'This would look to the immediate establishment of a series of concerts to be known as the Nicholas Kilburn concerts which would be funded by the interest earned from my outright gift to the University of \$ 25,000. In order that the series could begin this season I would in addition guarantee the cost of the first concert.'

Peter Kilburn's generous endowment made possible an annual major concert in Convocation Hall dedicated to presenting prominent artists in memory of Peter's father, Nicholas Arthur Kilburn. The first concert of this series was held on the 12th of February in 1981. The famous US-American-Cuban pianist Jorge Bolet performed. The series has been a great success; this year's event marks the 30th season – truly a reason to celebrate.

Nicholas Arthur Kilburn (1875-1931) was an Englishman who immigrated to Canada in 1903 as a part of the Britannia Colony organized by an English Reverend. His Canadian life began at a Homestead near Lloydminster where his two sons Nicholas Weldon and Peter were born. After two years of struggling to set up the farm, Nicholas Arthur finally proved himself a good manager and businessman. He sold land and managed a ranch for a wealthy American, eventually becoming the agent of various Eastern insurance and investment firms. The Kilburn family moved to Edmonton in 1916, where Nicholas Arthur Kilburn was a member of the University of Alberta Board of Governors from 1929 to 1931.

Nicholas Weldon Kilburn (1906-1986), Nicholas Arthur's eldest son, followed a musical career as a pianist and a teacher in piano and voice. He was also known as a great accompanist, especially when he performed with his second wife, the famous soprano Lois Marshall. Three of his four sons also became musicians. Nicholas was bassoonist with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Michael a cellist with the Montreal Symphony and Paul a piano teacher and composer.

Peter Kilburn (1908-1995), Nicholas Arthur's second son, graduated from the University of Alberta in Arts and English in 1929. He played cello and worked with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in the 1920's. Later in life, he moved to Montreal where he worked as an investment banker. Peter was the Chairman of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and helped establish 'The Nicholas Arthur Kilburn Memorial Concert Series' in memory of his father at the University of Alberta. After his death, a lecture series on Business and Environment was established at the University of Alberta in Peter's memory.

The Kilburn family continues to demonstrate a strong and appreciated connection to music through 'The Nicholas Arthur Kilburn Memorial Concert Series.' An inspiration to students and the Edmonton community, this series offers a richness of experience unmatched by any other. Through this donation, Peter Kilburn has made it possible for the University of Alberta's Department of Music to invite world-famous musicians to offer specialized educational outreach for students, and unique concert experiences for audiences.

The generous contribution made possible by The University of Alberta Nicholas Arthur Kilburn Memorial Concert Series allows the University of Alberta Department of Music the opportunity to invite world renowned artists to perform for our students and community. Below, please find the list of performers to date since the Series' inception. We look forward to continuing in this rich tradition in years to come.

1981: Jorge Bolet, pianist
1982: York Winds
1982: Vancouver Chamber Choir
1983: Shura Cherkassky, pianist
1984: Guy Fallot, cellist
1985: Elly Ameling, soprano
1986: Eugene Istomin, pianist
1987: Franco Gulli, violinist
1988: Maureen Forrester, contralto
1989: Marek Jablonski, pianist
1990: Joseph Swensen, violinist
1991: Kaaren Erickson, soprano
1992: Detlef Kraus, pianist
1993: Ofra Harnoy, cellist
1994: Heinz Holliger, oboist
1995: Louis Quilico, baritone
1996: Stephen Hough, pianist
1997: Antonin Kubalek, pianist, with Ivan Zenaty, violinist
1998: David Higgs, organist
1999: Edith Wiens, soprano
2000: Convivium, keyboard trio
2001: Claude Frank, piano
2002: Jens Lindemann, trumpet
2003: Nathan Berg, baritone
2004: Octagon 2005, chamber ensemble
2005/6: Gilbert Kalish, pianist
2007: Paul Jacobs, organist
2008: Phillip Addis, baritone with Michael Massey, piano
2009: Brian Bowman, euphonium **cancelled due to illness**
rescheduled with Amy Beinert, euphonium
with the University of Alberta Symphonic Wind Ensemble
2010: Ilya Kaler, violinist
2011: Afiara String Quartet

String Quartet No. 11, Op. 95 in f minor "Serioso" by L. van Beethoven

The String Quartet, No. 11, Op. 95 "Serioso" by Beethoven is perhaps the most pivotal of all 16 quartets. Even though it marks the end of his so called "middle period" string quartets, it really bridges the gap between the first 11 quartets and the 5 late quartets. During the 12 year period of 1798-1810, Beethoven wrote the 11 quartets making up Op. 18, 59, 74, and 95. It would not be for another 13 years before he would begin work on his next quartet, Op. 127. Perhaps then the early and middle quartets have more in common than we tend to generally think? When we look at Beethoven's compositional life in this way, it becomes clear that Op. 95 really does serve a role of vital importance.

Easily the shortest of all Beethoven quartets, Op. 95 runs about 20 minutes. This by no means indicates that the piece is light in character, nor does it indicate that the piece lacks content in any way. While retaining the 4 movement form that holds true for all of his quartets thus far, Beethoven manages to share with us a glimpse of what may be to come in the late quartets. Perhaps one of the most significant changes to occur between these first 11 quartets and the final 5, initiated here in Op. 95, is the breakdown of sonata form.

One of the hallmarks of the sonata is its extensive development section, which until now Beethoven treated as such. But here, in the first movement of Op. 95, we see much of the development occurring in the exposition and so the development section itself lasts barely 20 bars. While perhaps this may seem somewhat analytical, it does translate directly into the character of the music. By developing much of his material during the exposition, the intensity and drama usually reserved for the development section becomes pervasive throughout the entire movement. There is hardly a moment to breathe as motives change frequently and corners are turned on a dime. This type of writing is the seed for the power, intensity, emotional depth, and innovation that we see in all of the late quartets.

The second movement, typically reserved for the slow movement of a quartet, is marked *Allegretto ma non troppo*. While this is often performed rather slowly, the indication of *Allegretto* perhaps asks for something of a quicker nature. This is just one of the many challenges of performing Beethoven. This really should be the “slow” movement but the constant flowing lines of the accompanying voices mixed with the quick tempo marking mean that perhaps we are not meant to be at rest here. The harmonic ambiguity of the opening certainly supports that. Though the key signature is that of D major, we do not have a true authentic cadence for 34 bars. That’s a long time to have no real sense of what key you are in. What this does to listeners and performers alike is give us all a sense of being somewhat unsettled.

This movement also contains a slow fugue, which is a device we will see again in the late quartets – most notably in the 1st movement of Op. 131. A series of D major chords brings this 2nd movement directly into the 3rd. Marked *Allegro assai vivace ma serio*, this is the movement from which the title “*Serioso*” comes.

The rather bizarre marking “*ma serio*” seems to be a direction from Beethoven that this movement is in no way a Scherzo, as one would normally expect. Again, this movement foreshadows what is to come in the late quartets. In fact, the main dotted motive that is the main building block for this movement becomes the same building block for the scherzo of Op. 127, though treated quite differently. This non-scherzo movement follows a form that Beethoven experimented with in Op. 59, No. 2, wherein the typical A-B-A form of the Scherzo becomes A-B-A-B-A by repeating the trio twice. What he does this time, however, is push the tempo for the final A section and this movement ends in a great fury.

The finale begins with the missing slow movement, albeit only 7 bars worth, and spills into the *Allegretto* section much in the way he does in the *Egmont Overture*. This is one of the stormiest movements of any string quartet up until this point.

True to form, there is no time to breathe or rest at all. Continuous 16th notes keep the angst throughout and whereas the first two movements leave questions about the tonal center of the work, this movement sits solidly in the home key of f minor. By and large all themes appear in their “correct” keys and it seems as though we might know how this piece will end. Just as it looks like we are in the home stretch, the strangest thing happens. The motives break down, the dynamic drops, and the music slows and rests on a ppp F major chord. Then without a break, the missing scherzo appears in the form of an extremely soft and impossibly fast coda in F major. The ending is breathless and filled with humor and joy. Apparently Beethoven was heard saying that this piece was never meant to be performed in public. If that is the case, then perhaps this piece is a type of experiment for him to try out some new ideas that would eventually inspire the late quartets. In any event, it is a true masterpiece for which we are very thankful!

String Quartet No. 4, Op. 44 in F major by Carl Nielsen

String Quartet No. 4, Op. 44, written in 1906, is the final published string quartet by Carl Nielsen. It is, in a way, the most experimental quartet while retaining much of the folk music character that influenced many of his works. His father was a violinist/fiddler and cornet player, and his mother, while not a performing musician, would sing Danish folk songs in the house as he was growing up. Nielsen himself tells us this is how he was first introduced to music. Though Nielsen was traditionally trained later on, the folk element remained the strongest influence on his compositional style.

Thanks to the combined efforts of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, writing string quartets became, and remains, a right of passage for many composers. It is often where we see the most innovation, the deepest emotion, and the composer’s most inner thoughts. This certainly holds true for Nielsen as well. While all 4 quartets share a certain progressive nature, this is the quartet that reaches the furthest. He searched to find a voice for string quartets during the creation of these pieces, so much so that only once he completed String Quartet No. 4 did he finally feel as though he understood how to write for strings. This quartet was originally titled *Piacavolezza*, so named in reference to the original marking of *Allegro piacevole ed indolente* (agreeable and lazy) for the 1st movement. During a revision of the work that took place 13 years later, Nielsen removed the title and decided to change the 1st movement marking to *Allegro non tanto e comodo*. Funny enough, agreeable and lazy are both very appropriate adjectives for the overall character of the first movement.

The main theme is more or less waltz-like using extremely unconventional harmonies. It is in this context where we really see Nielsen's innovation at work. F major seems more like an abstract idea in this movement as he moves through what seems like every other key until settling finally in F, no sooner than the final cadence of the movement. The movement is a fun, good natured journey revolving around this bizarre, at times almost circus like, waltz. Every instrument participates equally, trying out new keys and rhythmic combinations and the climax sees a return of the original waltz theme in a full fanfare. A short coda dissipates this energy quickly.

The 2nd movement, marked *Adagio con sentimento religioso*, is quite reminiscent of traditional Danish song, perhaps even of the songs Nielsen so loved hearing his mother sing. There is a powerful reverence throughout the movement and in stark contrast to the 1st movement, this sits comfortably in C major and follows traditional harmonic movement. The singing lines are supremely beautiful and one can feel how incredibly personal and special this music was for him.

The movement's final chorale foreshadows a glimpse of the finale. The 3rd movement, *Allegretto moderato ed innocento*, is a delightful child-like piece and there is no more accurate way to describe it than innocent. The opening duet between 1st violin and viola is nothing more than 3rds and 5ths, the simple building blocks of western harmony. This lasts only a few bars before the playfulness of the movement takes over. The second theme, initially a duet is filled with innocent joy and one cannot help but smile. After a short trio like section (which uses much of the same material) and a recapitulation of the opening, we find a coda with almost Spanish flavors to it that brings the movement to a restful close.

The finale begins with a *Molto adagio* that remembers the slow movement, though after only a few seconds the music bursts forward into the *Allegro non tanto, ma molto scherzoso*. It is this section that perhaps most strongly brings out the folk music and fiddling influence that formed Nielsen's early musical memories. The music here is completely joyful, dance-like, and pure. Each instrument joins in the fun and duets of the violins followed by viola and cello converse and play together. The second theme, while still quite bright, has brief moments of pain or regret but always returns to another light and playful section.

Just so that no one forgets the 1st movement, it seems, he writes an extremely chromatic, and remarkably innovative fugue-like section into the last movement before a short violin cadenza and reprise of the opening chorale. This time, however, the chorale is hushed so as to portray it perhaps as more of a memory than a concrete idea. After a short recap the coda winds down and brings us back home to F major. The quartet ends much as it should, with pride and joy and not a worry in the world.

String Quartet Op. 56 in d minor "Voces intimae" by Jean Sibelius

The string quartet known as "Voces intimae" by Jean Sibelius represents perhaps the only major chamber work by the composer. Written in 1908-09, this quartet is created during a period of remarkable chamber music output by several composers. Within about 15 years, we see great works appearing throughout Europe including *Verklärte Nacht* and 2 string quartets by Arnold Schönberg, as well as string quartets by Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Antonin Dvořák and Carl Nielsen. All of these highly romantic pieces are some of the last master works in this style that we will see. Once WWI happened, the face of music changed completely and so this really marks the end of the romantic period.

This string quartet became a work of deeply personal and inner expression for Sibelius. Despite being married and having children, he often felt lonely and suffered from depression during much of his adult life. In addition, he underwent major surgery in 1908 for suspected throat cancer. It was after that when he seriously went to work on the quartet. This work, in many ways, reflects this part of Sibelius' life with frequent moments of inner turmoil and restlessness. It contains 5 movements structured in an arch form, where the middle movement is the center piece and the other movements relate to one other closely (1&5, 2&4).

The piece opens with a simple dialogue between the first violin and cello, during which we see the main building blocks of the piece. This first movement alternates between quick scherzo like material and flowing lyrical lines that hark back to the opening duet. It is these lyrical lines that win out in the end and rather than dying away, they build into a massive chorale that takes us directly into the first scherzo. This light, fleeting 2nd movement lasts barely a few minutes but sheds a new light onto the violin/cello duet from the first movement. Here the original tune is taken by the viola part but this time as an accompaniment to a new playful tune in the first violin.

Just as quickly as this scherzo begins, it finishes in a series of short care free cadences in A major. As was noted earlier, the third movement is the center piece to the entire quartet. This is a profoundly inner and devastatingly moving piece, with an ending reminiscent of a tragic opera death scene. Maybe the most famous such scene is the Liebestod from Tristan und Isolde and what makes this scene so effective, among other things, is that Wagner never gives us a full cadence until the very end of the scene (in fact some argue that there is no real cadence in the entire opera until this moment). Where cadences should occur, he manages to turn corners and further the build up of tension and emotion. This is exactly what Sibelius does here. Though it eventually ends in F major, the highly chromatic opening of the movement and the continuously shifting key centers give rise to the complex harmonic journey on which we are all taken. All 4 voices are singing throughout the movement, usually in pairs, until the climax when all voices finally sing together.

Occurring twice in the movement is a set of chords, first in e minor and then later in c# minor, above which Sibelius wrote "voces intimae" into a score belonging to his friend (n.b. this marking does not appear in any published version). Marked ppp, these chords are the softest sounds in the entire piece. While it is unclear what he specifically means by "voces intimae" (and it would unfortunately be impossible to know for sure without asking him), to me it seems to indicate a personal reference for his friend and given the character of these whispered chords, it likely represents something incredibly sorrowful and inner. After several attempts to find rest in this movement, Sibelius finally succeeds 4 bars from the end with a gloriously warm and radiant F major chord. A gently falling F major triad rounds out the movement in a fashion highly reminiscent of Beethoven.

A second scherzo follows, though this one is darker and has the sense of being lost. The only movement written in 3, this should be a dance movement. It does, in fact, contain many dance elements but after the tragedy of the slow movement, there is too much turmoil and pain to truly dance. Spinning triplets take this movement over before the pain and frustration become too much and it ends with a series of outbursts from all 4 voices. The finale is a true moto perpetuo. With almost a folksy fiddling style, this movement starts with a bang and never stops. There are continuous running 16th notes that are pushed faster and faster throughout before it finally flies completely out of control in a fury of energy and passion.

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performance

World Music Week presents:

The West African Music Ensemble

Thursday, March 29, 2012 at 7pm in Convocation Hall

Admission by Donation

The Indian Music Ensemble

Friday, March 30, 2012 at 7pm in Convocation Hall

Admission by Donation

The Middle Eastern and North African Ensemble

Saturday, March 31, 2012 at 7pm in Convocation Hall

Admission by Donation

Thank you for supporting the Department of Music. Word of mouth is our strongest form of publicity. If you enjoyed tonight's performance, please share your experience with others!